

Hike in paddy MSP an eye-wash: Lok Satta

Written by

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The Lok Satta Party today termed the hike in the minimum support price of paddy as an eye-wash since it does not take into consideration the steep increase in costs of production.

The Union Government has raised the MSP for common paddy from Rs.1080 to Rs.1250 a quintal and for A grade paddy from Rs.1110 to Rs.1280 a quintal for the 2012-13 kharif season.

In a media statement, Mr. P. Bhaskara Rao, Convener, Federation of Independent Farmers' Associations and Lok Satta Party Secretary, recalled that the Swaminathan Commission had recommended that the MSP should be at least 50 per cent more than the cost of production. The cost of production has spiraled in the last few years because of the increase in costs of inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides and laborers' wages.

The Union Government decision falls far short of the commission's recommendation.

Mr. Bhaskara Rao said that the State Government had failed ensure MSP for paddy during the crop year 2011-12. It hurt the farmer further by enforcing a ban on movement of paddy and rice outside the State in contravention of laws and Central guidelines. It was only after the Lok Satta Party defied the illegal ban by launching a movement that the farmers received the MSP.

The farmers' leader demanded that the entire country be treated as one zone and the farmer given freedom to move his produce wherever there is demand.

Instead of leaving procurement to millers, the Andhra Pradesh Government should enter the market like its counterparts in Punjab and Chattisgarh.